



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL
JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE
Directorate F - Health, Consumers and Reference Materials
Unit F1 - Health in Society

CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR RADIATION ONCOLOGISTS AND PATHOLOGISTS FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVE ON BREAST CANCER (ECIBC)

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1. BACKGROUND

In 2008, the European Parliament Resolution¹ called on the Commission to develop European accreditation/certification programmes for cancer screening, diagnosis, and treatment based on European guidelines. The European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) was launched by the European Commission as a response to this call.

The key elements of the ECIBC are the development of the European Guidelines for Breast Cancer Screening and Diagnosis for prevention, screening and diagnosis of breast cancer and the ECIBC quality assurance (QA) scheme covering the entire care pathway. For each element defining the ECIBC, a working group was set-up: the Guidelines Development Group (GDG) and the Quality Assurance Scheme Development Group (QASDG)² (hereinafter, 'the group').

The members of both working groups were selected via an open call.

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), in collaboration with the Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), is hereby calling for expression of interest from radiation oncologists and pathologists to be appointed to the QASDG or GDG.

2. FEATURES OF THE GROUP

2.1 Composition of the group

The members will be individuals appointed in their personal capacity (Type A member³) who will act independently and in the public interest, not representing any private, commercial, or national interests.

The members must not have any interest (in particular, relevant professional and financial interests) in relation to the ECIBC that could affect their impartiality. Applicants must therefore submit a duly completed declaration of interests (DoI) form (via the application form), indicating any interest that may compromise or reasonably be perceived to compromise their independence, including any relevant circumstances relating to their close family members. Procedural guidance on compiling the DoI is also annexed to this call (Annex I).

In order to ensure continuity and smooth functioning of the group, the JRC will establish and maintain an expert pool, from which group members could be appointed or replaced. The call

¹European Parliament Resolution on combating cancer in the enlarged European Union
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2008-0121+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN>

²For details on the two working groups of the ECIBC please consult this page: <https://healthcare-quality.jrc.ec.europa.eu/discover-ecibc/governance/ecibc-working-groups>

³Type A group members
<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=faq.faq&aide=2>

for expert pool will be opened in the near future. The JRC will seek the applicants' consent before including their names in the expert pool. The list may be updated by the JRC at any time based on applications received during the open call, which will remain open until three months before the closure of the ECIBC project, allowing for continuous applications and ensuring a continuously populated expert pool.

The members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations or who, in the opinion of the JRC, do not comply with the confidentiality condition set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, will no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

2.2 Operation of the group

At the beginning of its activities, the group has adopted the rules of procedure (RoP) at the proposal by and in agreement with the JRC by simple majority.

The group has select two co-chairs (one clinical or content expert and one methodological expert) and two vice-chairs from among its members. The co-chairs' and vice-chairs' responsibilities will include close interaction with the JRC; planning the group's work; chairing, steering, and moderating the discussions at meetings; and drawing conclusions and other roles as outlined in the RoP.

The members are expected to actively contribute to discussions of the group and examine and comment on documents under preparation, respecting due deadlines. The members must have a sufficient level of IT literacy to be able work remotely, including electronic methods for the management and exchange of documents, as well as to join virtual meetings by means of web-based tools. Working documents will be made available and drafted in English. Meetings will also be held in English. Depending on demand and subject to fluctuations, the members are expected to be available for tasks completed remotely and to attend meetings by video-/teleconferencing, with the average frequency not exceeding 2-3 days per month. In addition, they may be required to occasionally attend physical meetings.

The members will sign a declaration of commitment to this effect (Annex II). Independence will be ensured by means of regular DoI and a conflict of interest management policy.

2.3 Remuneration

In case an on-site meeting is deemed required by the JRC, travel and subsistence expenses of the members participating in the activities will be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement will be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

2.4 Transparency

The group will carry out activities by observing principles of transparency. All relevant documents will be published by the JRC on the Healthcare Quality public website, which will be set up for ECIBC (for details, please visit "membership documents⁴"). In particular, the following data will be made available to the public, without undue delay:

- a) name of individuals appointed as ECIBC working group members and their brief CVs;
- b) rules of procedure;
- c) the members' declarations of interests, confidentiality, and commitment;
- d) draft agendas and or agendas of meetings;
- e) minutes of meetings;
- f) consumer and stakeholder dialogue activities.

Exceptions to publication will be considered where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001⁵.

2.5 Confidentiality

The members are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff.

In line with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396⁶, the members will not divulge information, including commercially sensitive or personal data, acquired as a result of the group's work, even after they have ceased to be members. They will sign a declaration of confidentiality to this effect. In line with the Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396, the members will comply with the Commission's security rules on the protection of EU classified and sensitive non-classified information, as set out in the Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443⁷ and 2015/444⁸.

Should the members fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

⁴Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43–48

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001R1049&from=en>

⁵Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001. OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43–48

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001R1049&from=en>

⁶ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2019/1396. OJ L 234, 11.9.2019, p. 23–30

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/PL/TXT/?uri=uriserv:OJ.L_.2019.234.01.0023.01.ENG

⁷Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443. OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41–52

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32015D0443>

⁸ Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/444. OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53–88

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32015D0444>

3. APPLICATION AND APPOINTMENT

Interested individuals are invited to submit their application to the JRC using an online application form. The application form must be completed in English.

One radiation oncologist and one pathologist will be appointed as members of the QASDG, and one pathologist will be appointed as a member of the GDG from among the applicants.

The evaluation procedure will take into account the requirements referred to in section 4.1 (eligibility requirements) and 4.2 (selection criteria) of this call.

Supporting documents:

An application will be deemed valid only if it is sent by the deadline and includes all the documents listed below:

- a completed on-line application form;
- a curriculum vitae in electronic Europass format⁹, not exceeding 4 pages in length;
- a publication list – ten best scientific publications in a relevant field published in the last ten years (The applicant may also additionally provide a list of ten publications of other types, e.g. book chapters);
- a DoI available from the application form;
- a privacy statement available from the application form.

Applicants must disclose any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest by submitting a DoI. Submission of a duly completed DoI form is necessary in order to be eligible for appointment in a personal capacity.

If appointed, the member will be asked to sign a declaration of confidentiality and one of commitment (Annex II) as well as annual written updates of their DoIs and written and/or oral updates of their DoIs before topic-specific meetings. These declarations will be made public.

Additional supporting documents may be requested at a later stage.

All documents submitted by applicants must be duly completed, legible, signed (bearing a wet signature when relevant) and numbered sequentially.

Deadline for application:

The deadline for applications is 6 weeks from the moment the call will be published on the Healthcare Quality Website.

Applications received after the above deadline will only be evaluated for inclusion in the expert pool.

⁹ CV Europass format

<https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

4. SELECTION PROCEDURE

All valid applications will be subjected to a selection procedure consisting of four main steps:

1. checking of the applications against the eligibility requirements and drawing up a list of eligible applications;
2. evaluation of eligible applications against the selection criteria in order to shortlist suitable candidates;
3. appointment of the members from among the shortlisted candidates;
4. establishing an expert pool from the list of suitable candidates that have not been appointed as group members.

Applicants will be contacted asking for their consent to be included in the expert pool.

4.1 Eligibility requirements

To be considered as eligible, the applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

1. Must have a university degree at postgraduate level (bachelor's + 2 years), in an area relevant to the subject of this call;
2. Must have a minimum of 10 years of relevant professional experience¹⁰ in at least one of the relevant competence fields listed in the call (see Annex I);
3. Must have active employment or involvement in at least one of the competence fields applied for;
4. Must have good knowledge of the English language, allowing professional functioning in English¹¹ (including active participation in deliberations and writing reports in English);
5. Must not be an ECIBC National Contact.

Only the applicants who meet all these requirements will be included in the subsequent selection steps.

4.2 Selection criteria

Applications that meet all eligibility requirements will be evaluated on the basis of the following aspects in order to shortlist the suitable candidates:

1. postgraduate education;
2. work experience;
3. relevant professional, scientific, and technical expertise.

¹⁰ To confirm the eligibility requirement of 10 years of professional experience (years are counted only if they are in a relevant field): years of study included in eligibility criterion 2 (post-graduate education) are NOT counted as professional experience; each additional post-graduate course of study can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of ONE year; doctoral studies can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of THREE years; a medical specialisation can be counted as working experience up to a maximum of FIVE years.

¹¹As a guide, 'Ability to work in English' corresponds to level B2 or above, as set out in the Council of Europe reference document for the European Language Portfolio ('Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment'). For more information, please refer to:

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/resources/european-language-levels-cefr>

Evaluation will be based on the evidence provided by the applicant. The successful applicants will be placed on the list of suitable candidates.

4.3 Appointment of members

The members will be appointed from the list of suitable candidates (see section 4.2).

5. ANNEXES

Annex I

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) Guidance for completing the Annual Declaration of Interests¹² (DoI) form (version 2)

I. INTRODUCTION

This guidance relates to the implementation of the provisions on independence and transparency of Commission Decision 2012/C 198/06¹³.

It aims to give clear indications on how to declare any interest that could affect the ability of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC) working group members to act in the public interest.

According to Decision 2012/C 198/06, the responsibility for declaring all relevant interests is placed on the individuals completing their declaration. A false or incomplete declaration may have consequences on the acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of the experts' advice, since this could be challenged before the Court of Justice/General Court under the conditions of Article 263 TFUE¹⁴.

Interests are declared as an indication if conflicts of interest (CoIs) could arise. The expert shall not assess whether a CoI is present. The assessment of whether a CoI exists will be performed by the CoI evaluation panel from the JRC.

A declared "interest" is not automatically considered to lead to a conflict of interest. It is well understood that, in general, individuals who are involved in a particular process have an inherent professional interest in the subject and in being involved in the process as such.

The following information covers the Declaration of Interests (DoI) form (version n°2) to be filled in by the members for the ECIBC working groups (Guidelines Development Group and Quality Assurance Scheme Development Group).

¹²According to European Commission's Decision C(2016) 3301 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups, Articles 2(4) and 11 each member of an expert group has to complete a DoI form.

[https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=C\(2016\)3301&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=C(2016)3301&lang=en)

¹³Decision 2012/C 198/06. Setting up a multisectoral and independent expert panel to provide advice on effective ways of investing in health.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019D0521%2801%29>

¹⁴TFUE, Article 263. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E263:EN:HTML>

II. WHAT TO DECLARE?

Experts shall declare past activities (for the last five years). The European Commission recognises that high quality and up-to-date scientific expertise is by nature based on prior experience, connection to the scientific world and involvement in current research. Therefore, having an interest does not necessarily mean having a CoI.

1. Ownership of shares or other investments

Ownership of shares or other investments in a company or other entity operating in a business that can be affected directly by the opinions of the respective ECIBC working group.

This includes holding any form of equity, bonds, and partnership interests in the capital of a company. The holding of financial interests connected with a pension scheme or other complex investment funds would not be considered a financial interest, provided that the individual has no influence on its financial management.

2. Employment

All forms of employment, part-time and full-time, either paid or unpaid, in any organisation having activities falling within the scope of the ECIBC.

3. Memberships

For example,

- Any participation in the internal decision-making body of a company, trade association or other private entity such as a non-profit organisation dealing with issues related to the scope of the ECIBC (e.g. board membership, directorship).
- Any paid or unpaid, past, present or envisaged activity in which the expert or his depended collaborators provided technical or scientific advice or services in domains of relevance for the work of the ECIBC.

4 and 5. Research

Any activity as investigator in research studies related to the ECIBC, including the drafting of research programmes or the selection of research projects and current funding of research in relation to matter or work financed by a private or public entity, including grants, rents, sponsorships and fellowships.

6. Intellectual property rights (IPR)

Rights granted to creators and owners of works that are the result of human intellectual creativity that bring personal financial benefit to the expert.

Only the IPR falling within the remit of the work of the ECIBC need be taken into account. These can be copyrights, patents, trademarks etc.

7. Interests of immediate family members

Known interests held by family members and relatives (spouse, parents, children, brothers and sisters, irrespective of whether they live at the same address or not) or other persons under the care of the members of the household of the expert.

8. Other activities

Any interest other than the above which can be perceived as a potential source of conflict in an activity included in the ECIBC working groups' remit.

It should be intended as any membership or affiliation other than the above which can be perceived as an interest in the field of activity of the respective ECIBC working group.

III. PUBLICATION

The DoI of the appointed members will be made public in accordance with the provisions on transparency foreseen by Decision 2012/C 198/06². These will be posted on the website of the Healthcare Quality Group dedicated to the ECIBC working groups.

COMPLIANCE WITH PROVISIONS ON PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

The European Commission processes personal data pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725¹⁵ of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies on the free movement of such data.

The specific processing of data included in the ECIBC DoI form by the JRC's Directorate F, Health, Consumers and Reference Materials, F1 Health in Society Unit, Healthcare Quality Group is covered by the notification DPR-EC-00656.1¹⁶, Data Protection Office public register.

¹⁵Protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R1725>

¹⁶Personal data processing including the Declaration of Interests

<https://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register/detail/DPR-EC-00656>

Annex II

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer

Declarations of confidentiality and commitment

NOTE:

This is a draft version of the declarations of confidentiality and commitment that members are expected to submit before being appointed to one of the ECIBC working groups. This version is made available for information only and is not required to be included as supporting documentation when submitting an application to the ECIBC working groups.

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer – Declaration of confidentiality

Name:

I hereby declare that:

1. I am aware of my obligation to respect confidentiality and not to divulge any information acquired as a result of my work in one of the working groups of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (hereinafter, 'the group'), unless it is made publicly accessible by the (Joint Research Center) JRC. I will respect the confidential nature of the scientific opinions expressed by members of the group or other members during group meetings and discussions. I will not disclose such information even after my participation in the work of the group has ceased.
2. I am aware of the Commission's security rules for protecting European Union classified information and sensitive non-classified information, as laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 and 2015/444. Should I receive confidential information or restricted information in the course and context of my duties for the group, I will treat it as strictly confidential and use it exclusively for the purpose for which it was made available. I will handle the information in accordance with the provided handling instructions and not divulge them to any third party.

The above implies that the undersigned:

- will not divulge, publish, or otherwise make available to any third party, information received from the group without prior written consent of the JRC, even after completion of a specific event or assignment. The duty of confidentiality exists vis-à-vis any third party, including employees, employers, affiliates or the general public;
- will not use information received from the group for personal benefit or the benefit of any third party;
- will ensure safe storage of the confidential or restricted information (in accordance with the corresponding handling instructions), by applying appropriate security measures if the information is managed electronically, and will not retain the information for longer than needed for the completion of an assignment within the group;

Date:

Signature:

European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer – Declaration of commitment

Name:

1. Commitment

While contributing to the activities in the working groups of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (hereinafter, 'the group'), I will:

- act independently in the public interest and make complete declarations of any direct or indirect interests that might be considered prejudicial to my independence;
- inform the JRC Scientific Secretariat if I take part in a working group/activity with interest in the field of breast cancer and/or in relation to the activities of the European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer.
- comply with the group's rules on the handling of conflict of interest;
- contribute actively to the work of the group through working remotely and, when necessary, by attending meetings;
- conduct myself in exemplary manner in all activities linked to the group;
- comply with the rules on reimbursement of travel expenses and payment of allowances and indemnities in place in the Commission;
- ensure appropriate use of scientific publications provided by the JRC scientific secretariat and respect copyrights as outlined below;
- always contact the JRC Scientific Secretariat when communicating with the media, stakeholders, or the general public on a matter that falls within the group's remit.

2. Copyrights and library working tools

In case the undersigned is involved in the preparation of scientific outputs, she/he may receive from the JRC scientific publications and journals protected by copyrights as hand-outs or via e-mail.

The undersigned will be allowed to make limited use of journals and scientific publications but shall not:

- distribute copies of articles and journals to third parties;
- use articles or journals for commercial purposes;
- use the materials for other purposes than the assignment with the group.

Duration: The validity of the present declaration is limited to one mandate of the group (five years) from the date of signature, unless the undersigned informs the JRC scientific secretariat on the termination of her/his activities within the group.

Date:

Signature: